

UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT
EUGENE DISTRICT OFFICE

DECISION RECORD DOCUMENTATION and FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT
Bishops Hat Commercial Thinning
Environmental Assessment No. OR090-EA-02-02

FONSI:

On the basis of the information contained in the Environmental Assessment, and all other information available to me, it is my determination that implementation of the proposed action or alternatives will not have significant environmental impacts beyond those already addressed in the *Record of Decision (ROD) for Amendments to Forest Service and Bureau of Land Management Planning Documents Within the Range of the Northern Spotted Owl* (April 1994), and the *Eugene District Record of Decision and Resource Management Plan* (June 1995) as amended by the *Record of Decision for Amendments to the Survey and Manage, Protection Buffer, and other Mitigation Measures Standards and Guidelines* (January 2001), with which this EA is in conformance, and does not constitute a major federal action having a significant effect on the human environment. Therefore, an environmental impact statement or a supplement to the existing environmental impact statement is not necessary and will not be prepared.

Decision:

Based on the analysis documented in the Environmental Assessment (EA) OR090-02-02 and the Finding of No Significant Impact it is my decision to select the proposed action. The Bishops Hat Commercial Thinning project is located in T. 17 S., R 7 W., Section 21 Willamette Meridian. Implementation of this action will result in commercial thinning of approximately 131 acres (including road right-of-ways) within the General Forest Management Area (GFMA) and Riparian Reserve of the Matrix land use allocation. Approximately 30 acres of the Riparian Reserve will be thinned to accelerate the attainment of the Aquatic Conservation Strategy (ACS) objectives. A cruised volume of 2793 million board feet of timber will be harvested. The Proposed Action includes forest management activities, temporary spur construction (with decommissioning) and road renovation. All the project design features identified in the EA will be implemented to minimize any impacts to existing habitat and resources.

Decision Rationale:

The proposed action is tiered to and is in compliance with the *Record of Decision for Amendments to Forest Service and Bureau of Land Management Planning Documents within the Range of the Northern Spotted Owl, April 1994, and the Eugene District Record of Decision (ROD)/Resource Management Plan (RMP), June 1995 as amended by the Record of Decision for Amendments to the Survey and Manage, Protection Buffer, and other Mitigation Measures Standards and Guidelines, January 2001.* The proposed Action was selected because it best meets the goals and objectives of the GFMA and Riparian Reserve of the Long Tom River Watershed as discussed in the EA, pages 2,3,5. The proposed action would maintain or restore riparian conditions by enhancing growth of the residual trees and by protecting those structural features of the riparian currently present (project design features of the Proposed Action, EA pages 5,6,7 and comment responses, pages 17-20). The treatment is consistent with the Aquatic Conservation Strategy (ACS) Objectives (EA pages 3, 13-14).

As presented in the environmental assessment, all required surveys for Threatened or Endangered as well as Survey and Manage (S & M) species have been conducted according to accepted protocols (EA, pages 5, 8, 10-11).

The proposed action was determined to have no effect on coho or spring chinook salmon, on Essential Fish Habitat for coho or spring chinook salmon, or Critical Habitat for coho or spring chinook salmon (EA, page 16).

Consultation and Coordination:

This proposed action is addressed in the FY 2001 Habitat Modification Biological Opinion, dated 10/04/00, which has been extended by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to cover FY 2002 habitat modification projects. Because of the modification of dispersal habitat, this project "May Affect, but is Not Likely to Adversely Affect" the northern spotted owl. No habitat for the marbled murrelet exists within the harvest unit, but some residual trees with appropriate nesting structure do exist within 0.25 mile north of the proposed action. This area was not subject to murrelet surveys and therefore must be assumed to be occupied. Consequently, this action "May Affect, and is Likely to Adversely Affect" the marbled murrelet due to disturbance. There would be no effect to the bald eagle. All required mitigation measures included in this Opinion would be followed to ensure compliance with the Endangered Species Act.

Pursuant to the Endangered Species Act, formal consultation to evaluate the effects of the proposed action was not required to be conducted with the National Marine Fisheries Service since there would be "*No Effect*" to any federally listed/proposed aquatic species.

The Bureau of Land Management, Coast Range Resource Area consulted with the Confederated Tribes of Siletz, and the Confederated Tribe of Grande Ronde. No response was received.

Public Comments:

Both the EA and preliminary FONSI were advertised on February 6, 2002, as available for a 30 day public review period in the Eugene Register-Guard. Copies of the EA and preliminary FONSI were mailed to interested individuals on our mailing list. Two comment letters were received on this EA during the 30 day comment period provided. These comments were considered and the EA revised to include a Comment and Response section. This revised EA and a copy of this Decision Record was mailed to these commentators.

/s/ Steven Calish
Steven Calish, Field Manager

July 26, 2002
Date